have informed that while they have received no proposal to set up a steel plant at paradeep, they have received one proposal from Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. (TISCO) for setting up of a port-based steel plant at Gopalpur in the Distt. of Ganjam in Orissa.

(b) to (d) Government of Orissa have informed that they have been reviewing the progress/problems/issues of TISCO's steel plant on monthly basis to ensure its timely implementation. Details of steps taken or being taken towards the implementation of this project are as under :—

* 3748.246 acres of land has already been handed over to the company for construction of the steel plant and rehabilitation colony.

* Construction of boundary wall and levelling of the ground are in progress.

* A rehabilitation colony has been developed by TISCO in the outskirts of Berhampur City where 697 families have already shifted.

* Government of Orissa has approached the Union Government for allotment of additional funds to complete the Daitari—Banaspani rail-link early.

* Proposal for environment clearance for Pipalpanka Dam Project has been submitted to Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India.

* Revised proposal for forest clearance is under preparation by the Company.

* Application for grant of mining lease for iron ore for the said steel plant has been recommended by the State Government to Union Government for its approval.

Production cost of Steel

†4514. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the unit-wise production cost of steel;

(b) the total amount of tax imposed on steel;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the average market price of steel;

(d) what is the percentage of profit therein; and

(e) the steps taken to reduce the prices of steel ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) to (e) After the decontrol of steel in January 1992, the demand, production and prices of steel are driven by market forces. The cost of production of steel primarily depends upon prices of inputs such as iron ore, coal, steel scrap and energy, cost of freight and labour Customs/Excise Duty on inputs and raw materials and financial charges. The cost of these inputs factors keeps varying from time to time according to the inter-play of market forces. The cost of production also varies from item to item and depends on the specification thickness, grade etc. of the steel items required to be produced. As such an average cost of steel production cannot be arrived at. Moreover the Government has no role to play in either fixing the prices of steel or in the profit margin. The Government's role is limited to levying of taxes on steel and as per budget 2000-01, the Central value added tax has been proposed to be fixed @ 16% and the peak rate of custom duty has been proposed to be levied @ 35%.

Collaboration in Steel Sector on **Production Project**

†4515. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether any discussion was held recently regarding foreign collaboration in the steel sector ;

(b) if so, the details thereof, together with the country-wise results thereof;

(c) the names of the foreign companies signing the agreements regarding collaboration in the steel sector, togetherwith the effect thereof on production, projectwise; and

(d) the progress made, so far, in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) to (d) India has signed inter-governmental cooperation

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.